

Message Text

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21

ORIGIN ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 ERDA-07 AF-06 ARA-10 CIAE-00

DODE-00 EA-10 EUR-12 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NASA-02

NEA-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OIC-02 SP-02 PA-02 PRS-01

OES-05 SS-15 USIA-15 SAJ-01 /141 R

DRAFTED BY ACDA/MEA/ES:DGALLIK:BAR

APPROVED BY IO:ROBLAKE

ACDA/MEA:BDOENGES

ACDA/IR:DTHOMPSON

C:JDOBBINS

PM/DCA:HPHELPS

L/UNA:MMATHESON

EUR/SOV:BZOOK

OASD/ISA:JENAFTZINGER

S/S: RKUCHEL

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R 202312Z JUN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS STATE 146126

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, UN, US

SUBJECT: U.S. VIEWS ON EXPERT GROUP REPORT ON REDUCTION
OF MILITARY BUDGETS (ROB)

REFERENCE: USUN A-222

1. MISSION IS REQUESTED TO TRANSMIT TO THE SECRETARIAT
WITH APPROPRIATE SALUTATION THE FOLLOWING USG RESPONSE
TO THE SYG'S REQUEST FOR THE VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS OF
STATES ON THE EXPERTS' REPORT ON ROB, PURSUANT TO RES.
3254 OF 29TH UNGA.

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2. BEGIN TEXT. THE U.S. CONSIDERS THAT THE REPORT OF THE

GROUP OF CONSULTANT EXPERTS ON THE REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS MAKES A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBJECT. THE EXPERTS, COMING FROM A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF COUNTRIES, HAVE IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT ISSUES THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED IN CONNECTION WITH CONSIDERATION OF INTERNATIONALLY-AGREED MILITARY BUDGET REDUCTIONS. ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY IN THIS RESPECT ARE SECTIONS IV ("THE MEANING AND MEASUREMENT OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE") AND V ("REDUCTION OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE AS A DISARMAMENT MEASURE"). THE DETAILED DISCUSSION OF A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL ISSUES RELATED TO MILITARY EXPENDITURES IN ANNEX II OF THE REPORT PROVIDES A SOUND BASIS FOR FURTHER WORK.

3. TWO OF THE MOST BASIC ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE CONSIDERED, AS RECOGNIZED IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3254 (XXIX), ARE (A) A BROADLY ACCEPTABLE DEFINITION OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES AND (B) THE RELATED QUESTION OF A STANDARDIZED SYSTEM FOR MEASURING MILITARY EXPENDITURES.

4. A MILITARY BUDGET SHOULD INCLUDE ALL THOSE EXPENDITURES WHICH MAKE DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OVERALL CURRENT AND FUTURE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF A COUNTRY. SECTION II A OF ANNEX II OF THE REPORT LISTS SEVERAL ALTERNATIVE CLASSIFICATIONS OF OUTLAYS IN MILITARY BUDGETS AND ILLUSTRATES THE DIFFICULTIES OF DEFINING MILITARY EXPENDITURES.

5. THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARDIZED SYSTEM FOR MEASURING MILITARY EXPENDITURES WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE SUBJECT OF FURTHER INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATION UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS OR THE CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT. THE KINDS OF MODELS OF STANDARDIZED PROCEDURES PRESENTED IN SECTION II C OF ANNEX II OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT PROVIDE A GOOD STARTING POINT FOR FURTHER WORK. DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARDIZED MEASUREMENT SYSTEM REQUIRES THE SOLUTION TO SUCH IMPORTANT PROBLEMS AS THE VALUATION OF RESOURCES IN THE MILITARY SECTOR, THE IMPACT OF INFLATION ON

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MILITARY EXPENDITURES, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL VALUE COMPARISONS. ACCEPTANCE OF A STANDARDIZED FRAMEWORK OF MEASUREMENT BY A LARGE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE VALUE IN ITSELF AS A MEANS OF REDUCING MISUNDERSTANDING AND SUSPICION. IT WOULD, MOREOVER, LAY AN ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION FOR POSSIBLE AGREEMENT ON MILITARY EXPENDITURE LIMITATIONS.

6. THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN SERIOUS EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE CONCEPTUAL AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN ACHIEVING EFFECTIVE AGREEMENTS ON MILITARY EXPENDITURE LIMITATIONS THAT WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO THE SECURITY NEEDS OF THE PARTICIPANTS. AT THE PRESENT STAGE, HOWEVER, IN THE ABSENCE OF SOLUTIONS TO FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS, IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO CONSIDER THE LEVELS OF POSSIBLE REDUCTIONS IN MILITARY EXPENDITURES AND THE DISPOSITION OF FUNDS THUS SAVED. END TEXT. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY EXPENDITURES, MILITARY BUDGET, TEXT, CONSULTANTS, MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE146126
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DGALLIK:BAR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750217-0058
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750628/aaaaazsu.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ACDA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 USUN A-222
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAR 2003 by PhilliR0>; APPROVED <09 MAR 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. VIEWS ON EXPERT GROUP REPORT ON REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS (ROB)
TAGS: PARM, MPOL, US, UN, UNSC
To: USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006